

research associate at the Washington-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs:

The mammoth street demonstration witnessed in Havana on June 21 was a glaring example of yet another counter-productive, anti-Castro initiative fathered by Washington policymakers. The latter may be long on raw ideology, but demonstrably, are short on reality. On that day, tens of thousands of Cubans gathered in front of the U.S. Interests Section (the official U.S. presence in Havana) to warn Washington against resorting to any preemptive military action against the island.

The Bush administration, following the practice of all of its predecessors, has maintained a cordon sanitaire around Cuba, but ended up having to waive the penalties against the international business community mandated by the ill-reputed Helms-Burton legislation. Nor is the U.S. winning many backers with its patently self-serving Florida electoral strategy masked as a foreign policy. The Bush administration has been so obsessed with wooing Miami, that it has fallen victim to its own immoderacy, recently cutting remittances and limiting packages and visits from exiles to their Cuban relatives. By its cut offs, the White House has displayed the same venomous lack of humanity and blind fury that was seen with the Elian Gonzalez affair. Now, even many of those being wooed—Cuban expatriates—are lashing back at Bush for daring to curb family ties in a craven hunt for votes.

By a series of malevolent initiatives specifically aimed at worsening U.S.-Cuban relations, Secretary of State Colin Powell invoked the latest phase of a foreign policy drive whose anointed mission was to place Florida into President Bush's win column in November, even though such a demarche could mortally wound his already fading reputation on regime issues. The motivation for such a sterile approach was prompted not so much by any genuine threat posed by Cuba to any conceivable U.S. regional security interests, but almost entirely by domestic political factors. The predictable Castro response: defiance in the form of the June 21 demonstration, which provided yet another opportunity for the Cuban leader to return to his popular base to seek reaffirmation in a spectacular show of political thunder. But the question remains, when will Washington realize that attempting to isolate Cuba internationally and pressuring it internally at best will only fail or induce more Cubans to attempt immigrating to the U.S.—something that U.S. officials aren't particularly anxious to encourage.

Despite its specious claim of "hastening democracy on the island," arguably, the Bush administration's latest policies do the opposite—purposely escalating U.S.-Cuban tensions while further legitimizing Castro in the eyes of many islanders. President Bush's mean and nasty acts serve to undermine his professed lofty intentions, as they confirm Cuba's role as a David daring to stand up to Goliath's benighted outrages. For almost half a century the U.S. has attempted to isolate Castro's Cuba, even though predictably, these initiatives have always backfired. In reality, it is Washington's Cuba policy that has ended in the dock, not Cuba, with only dependent states like Chile and Costa Rica cheering Washington onward.

Meanwhile, for 12 years the U.N. has voted overwhelmingly to end the U.S. embargo that is almost solely honored by this country. With decades of converting "democracy" rhetoric into self-serving demagoguery aimed at asphyxiating the Cuban economy and immiserating its population, Washington's relations with Havana remain non-negotiable, beyond the purview of the construc-

tive engagement now routinely employed toward Libya, North Korea, Vietnam and China.

Nor would Castro's death instantly transform Washington's embargo strategy into a success story. In fact, it might only underline that the U.S. fomented the deterioration of Cuban society while it bided its time for the right moment to initiate yet another intrusion into the internal affairs of a hemispheric nation. Clearly, neither Castro nor any other likely successor has indicated any intention to fall on their sword to guarantee another Bush term. Meanwhile Washington's thinking by now is so petrified that it is incapable of moving past its Cold War strategy of continually escalating threats and bringing distress upon an innocent population, to encourage what it disingenuously calls "democratic change."

CONCERNING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD IN SCHOOLS TO HUNGRY OR MALNOURISHED CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 14, 2004

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today to discuss an issue that is one of my top legislative priorities, the importance of food distribution in schools to hungry or malnourished children around the world. This bill passed the Senate June 3, 2004, and I hope that we in the House of Representatives can expedite its passage today as well.

As chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, it continues to trouble me that there are more than 300,000,000 chronically hungry and malnourished children in the world. More than half of these children go to school on an empty stomach, and almost as many do not attend school at all, but might if food were available.

Distributing food in schools is one of the simplest and most effective strategies to fight hunger and malnourishment among children. When school meals are offered to hungry or malnourished children, attendance rates increase significantly, particularly for girls.

Improving the quality and access to education for girls is one of the most important factors in reducing child malnutrition in developing countries. Girls who attend schools tend to marry later in life and have fewer children, thereby helping them escape a life of poverty.

At a time when we are trying to encourage many countries to adopt educational infrastructure to lay the groundwork for teaching democratic ideals, we must be more attuned to the barriers preventing children from attending school. Distributing food in schools has been correlated to better school attendance.

We must continue to work to improve the literacy rates and increase job opportunities. Education addresses several of the root causes of terrorism, and we can do something to impact it right now. The distribution of food in schools increases attendance of children who might otherwise be susceptible to recruitment by groups that offer them food in return for their attendance at extremist schools or participation in terrorist training camps.

It is my hope that our President will work with the United Nations and its member states to expand international contributions for the distribution of food in schools around the world.

HONORING CITY OF NOVI POLICE DEPARTMENT ON 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 2004

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the City of Novi Police Department as we celebrate the department's 50th Anniversary.

The men and women who protect the Novi community have a long and distinguished record.

In 1954, the Oakland County Sheriff's Department had been patrolling the small farming community of Novi, and protecting its approximately 5,000 residents. As the community grew, the Board of Trustees worked to establish their own force.

The Department's first chief, Lee BeGole, a member of the Wayne County Sheriff's Department and World War II U.S. Army veteran, organized the fledgling organization. BeGole served alone initially, adding three or four officers later on. He was a dedicated law enforcement officer who served the City of Novi for 32 years.

During its early years, the Novi Police Department served the community by making the most of its meager means. With a pair of police cars and no police radios, the operation of the Department was very basic. Police equipment was very basic, too. The officers furnished their own firearms and paid for their uniforms. The patrol cars did not have overhead emergency lights, but rather were equipped with red or blue spotlights and a "coaster siren" under the hood.

The size and scope of the department has increased greatly over the past half century. In 1991 Chief BeGole retired and Douglas F. Shaeffer became the second Chief of Police in Novi's history. The Department moved into the 21st Century—the 1968 Rambler with the single red/blue roof light and coaster siren has been replaced by a large fleet of the latest police package Ford Crown Victorias, equipped with multifunction electronic emergency lights and siren. The old faithful police revolvers have been replaced by the newest in semi-automatic Glock pistols. Laptop computers are installed in each patrol unit, and a new in-house data system at the station has taken over most of the hand-written reports and forms used daily.

Today, the City of Novi Police Department is truly a world-class law enforcement organization led by outstanding men and women who are committed to providing the community with the highest caliber service and protection.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask you and my esteemed colleagues to please join me in congratulating Chief Doug Shaeffer, the men and women of the Novi Police Department, and the elected officials and citizens of Novi for their support of 50 years of excellence in law enforcement.